INDIA

A Record and Review of Indian Affairs

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This Supplement consists of a FULL Report, specially drawn up for "India," of the Debates on Indian subjects in both Houses of Parliament, and questions put on such subjects and the answers given to them, arranged chronologically, from June 28th to July 23rd.

Imperial Parliament.

June 28th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RAILWAYS IN INDIA.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for India, what had been the amount of charge on Indian revenues over the receipts from railway working on State railways and on guaranteed railways in the last 10 years.

The hon. member also asked the Seeretary of State for India, what was the original estimate of loss on the working of the Indian railway system for last year, and what was the amount of the revised estimate.

The hon. member also asked the Secretary of State for India what was the amount of capital required for carrying out the programme of railway extension in India during each of the three years 1897, 1898 and 1899; and what would be the estimated amount of interest payable thereupon during each year of the period of construction.

The hon. member also asked the Secretary of State for India what were the several dates at which the contracts with the guaranteed Indian railway companies, now involving loss to the State, could be terminated or modified.

Lord G. HAMILTON: In reply to the hon. member's four questions, I have to make the following statement.

The State and guaranteed railways of India have been worked, during the ten years 1887—97, at an average profit of 5¼ per cent.; but owing to the fall in exchange a total net loss of Rx. 7,781,914 on the State and Rx. 8,679,557 on the guaranteed lines has accrued within that period.

The net loss in 1896-7 was estimated at Rx. 2,274,300; the revised estimate was Rx. 2,810,200; but according to the latest information in my possession, it is likely to be Rx. 2,665,800.

The amount of capital expenditure sanctioned for each of the three years, 1896-7, 1897-8 and 1898-9, is Rx. 10,174,700, Rx. 10,130,000 and Rx. 9,360,000, respectively; and the amount payable by way of interest in each of those years may be estimated at Rx. 153,000, Rx. 457,000 and Rx. 750,000; against which must be set the profits to be received from such portions of the new lines as may be opened within three years.

The only two contracts with guaranteed companies, which in 1895-6 involved a net loss to the State, are those with the Great Indian Peninsular and the Madras railway companies. They terminate on the 30th June, 1900, and the 31st December, 1907, respectively.

MR. MULLICK AND THE INNS OF COURT RIFLES.

Sir CHARLES DILKE asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether he was aware that Mr. Mullick, a native of India resident in this country, after having been proposed and seconded as an eligible member of the Inns of Court Rifles, was informed by the commanding officer that, although he was personally unexceptionable, Indians being objected to by some members of the corps, the nomination must be withdrawn, and wrote to the effect that, being an Indian native gentleman, Mr. Mullick was not eligible for an English volunteer corps:

Whether he was aware that natives of India belong to the University corps in Oxford and Cambridge and to many other corps:

Whether he was aware that an opinion had been expressed by the Benchers of the four Inns of Court that the exclusion of Indians as a class was regretable, and the commanding officer had stated publicly that there was a War Office memorandum which prohibited the enrolment of native Indians in English volunteer corps:

Whether there was any foundation for the statement of the commanding officer as to the order of the War Office:

And, whether a correspondence had taken place between the Benchers of Gray's Inn and the commanding officer of the regiment, in which they stated that the grounds on which Mr. Mullick had been declared ineligible were erroneous.

MR. BRODRICK: The admission of any subject of her Majesty to a Volunteer corps rests solely with the commanding officer. In Mr. Mullick's case it is understood that the commanding officer did not accept his nomination. There are natives of India serving in Volunteer corps, and there is no War Office document prohibiting their enrolment. Owing to a misapprehension caused by some unofficial correspondence, the commanding officer of the Inns of Court Volunteers was led to believe that natives of India could not be enrolled, but this has been corrected. It is understood that there has been some correspondence between the commanding officer and the Benchers; but the officer commanding is the only authority as to persons to be enrolled in Volunteers Corps who can be recognized.

June 29th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

OPERATIONS IN THE CHIN HILLS.

Captain NORTON asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether he could state if a medal was granted for all the operations in the Chin Hills in 1891 and 1892; and whether he was aware that many who were engaged had not received the medal.

Mr. Brodrick: A medal was granted, but it was not awarded to columns which met with no opposition.

June 30th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS.

Brahmini, Kally,—Petition of Kally Brahmini, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

Singh, Gopal,—Petition from Udaipurwate, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

Ramsarup, Kabir Panthi,—Petition of Kabir Panthi Ramsarup, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

July 1st.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

LOANS RAISED IN INDIA.

East India (Loans raised in India),—Copy presented,—of Return of all Loans raised in India, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1897, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

THE OUTRAGES AT POONA.

Mr. Firbank asked the Secretary of State for India whether, in consequence of the murderous outrage at Poona made on Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst, the Indian Government would consider the desirability of adopting effectual means to prevent the inculcation of sedition through the Press.

Mr. MacNeill said that before that question was answered he wished to direct attention to its wording. In the first place, the question assumed as a matter of fact that sedition had been inculcated through the Indian native press. That was an argumentative and hypothetical expression, and there was not a particle of evidence offered to support the statement. Moreover, sedition was a matter of opinion. (Laughter.) He was perfectly serious in making that observation. The question of sedition could only be determined as an issue of fact, which when answered became an issue of law. What was or what was not sedition could never be discovered until the matter was subjected to some judicial investigation. He, therefore, objected to the question, as it appeared upon the paper, being put to a minister. It was the most vicious question in a Parliamentary sense, reflecting upon a whole class of the press, that had ever been presented to the House of Commons.

The Speaker: The statement as to there having been a murderous outrage at Poona is a statement of fact which, if I recollect aright, has already been quoted in this House by a minister of the Crown. As regards the latter part of the question, I see nothing irregular in it. (Hear, hear.)

Lord G. Hamilton: The police are now enquiring into the causes and circumstances of the outrage which has been recently committed at Poona. But the habitual dissemination of false intelligence and of appeals to religious animosities by a portion of the vernacular press is a matter which has for some years past received the careful attention of the Indian Government; and if the result of the present enquiry is to show that this outrage was prompted by articles of this character, the question of taking measures to prevent the encouragement of crime through the press will undoubtedly be taken into consideration. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. MacNeill: Would the enquiry be public?

Lord G. Hamilton: If the hon. gentleman thinks that a public enquiry into a murder conspiracy of this kind would facilitate the ends of justice he stands alone in that opinion. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Davitt: That is a speech.

Mr. MacNeill: I am quite content to stand alone.

Sir W. Wedderburn: Is it not the case that under the penal code stringent punishment is provided for these incitements to crime?

The Speaker: Order, order. That is really arguing the question. The noble lord has simply stated that there will be an enquiry into the matter, and that does not justify the hon. member in arguing the question that there are other means which would make it unnecessary to hold such an enquiry.

Sir W. Wedderburn: May I explain——

The Speaker: Order, order. The hon. gentleman is putting a question which is clearly out of order.

Sir W. Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had received copies of a joint Hindu and Muhammadan memorial, dated May 10, 1897, regarding the Poona plague administration, addressed to the Governor of Bombay by upwards of 2,000 leading citizens of Poona, and presented on their behalf by the principal Muhammadan and Hindu associations of the Deccan, giving specific instances of oppression and insult inflicted upon their families and religion, and declaring that a reign of terror had existed for the past eight weeks; whether he would state what reply was given to the petition, and what enquiry was made to test the truth of these allegations; and whether he would lay a copy of the petition and of the reply upon the Table of the House.

Lord G. Hamilton: I had not seen a copy of the memorial to which the hon. member refers until I received one to-day from him. The measures taken at Poona to prevent the spread of the plague, which have been attended by a very remarkable amount of success, the deaths from plague having fallen from 177 per week to 7 per week within the last two months have been made the subject of much misrepresentation and exaggeration in a portion of the vernacular Press. At present I can express no opinion as to the contents of the memorial, nor have I seen a copy of the Governor of Bombay's reply; but I am confident that he has been and is most careful to confine the action of the authorities to what is absolutely necessary for checking the plague, and to show all possible consideration to the religious opinions and customs of the inhabitants. I can say nothing with regard to laying papers on the Table until I receive an official report on the subject from India.

Mr. Whittaker (on behalf of Mr. Herbert Roberts) asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been drawn to the bitter complaints which had appeared in the vernacular newspapers of Poona and the Deccan generally with regard to the methods pursued by the authorities in dealing with the plague; whether he was aware that no such complaints had been made with respect to the administration in Bombay, and if it was the case that the work of dealing with the plague at Bombay had been surrounded with more difficulty than at Poona; whether he was able to lay papers upon the Table of the House with regard to the serious outrages reported from Poona; and whether he would order that a public and impartial enquiry should be held to investigate the administration with regard to the plague at Poona.

Lord George Hamilton: I am aware that, although the measures for checking the spread of the plague have been conducted on the same system at Poona and at Bombay, the unfavourable comments of the vernacular Press have been mainly confined to the newspapers of Poona and the Deccan. In view of the tone which had been previously adopted by those newspapers, this contrast does not afford matter for surprise. The recent outrages are now being enquired into by the police, and any publication of papers might tend to defeat the ends of justice. I have no reason to think, as at present advised, that any enquiry into the administration of Poona during the plague is necessary or desirable.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.
RECORD OF DEATHS FROM STARVATION.

Sir W. Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been drawn to a statement in the *Pioneer* of March 14th last, that the Government of India had issued a circular to the officers whose duty it was to report the deaths from famine directing them not to report any deaths as due to starvation except in cases where it could be clearly established that the victims had no food for several days; and and whether any means had been taken to prevent the trustworthiness of the record of famine mortality from being vitiated by this order.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am aware of the statements in a letter published in the *Pioneer* to which the hon. member

refers. I have seen no circular of the Government of India which would justify them, but I know that that Government have had reason to believe that deaths are frequently reported as due to starvation when they are really due to other causes, and that they have issued orders to prevent the famine statistics from being vitiated by inaccuracies of this kind.

July 2nd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RUPEE LOANS AND STERLING LOANS.

Mr. Thomas Bayley asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had had brought to his notice the memorandum by Mr. J. H. Sleigh, manager of the Bank of Bombay, showing the large economy that would be secured by taking up a sterling loan here instead of, as proposed by the Government officials, a rupee loan of four crores in India.

Lord G. Hamilton: My attention has been drawn to the memorandum by the manager of the Bank of Bombay, showing what would in his opinion be the economy resulting from raising a loan in sterling instead of in rupees, as indicated in the financial statement of the Government of India. I will only point out to the hon. member that Mr. Sleigh's calculations are purely hypothetical, being based on assumptions as to the price at which a second sterling loan could now be issued as compared with a rupee loan, and as to the rate of exchange, not only in the immediate future, but also during the whole of the next fifteen years.

THE OUTRAGES AT POONA.

Colonel Long asked the Secretary of State for India what steps the Government were taking with regard to the state of feeling among natives in India as shown by late events, more particularly by the murder of Lieutenant Ayerst.

The hon. member also asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Government proposed to recognise in any special manner the services rendered by Mr. Rand and those associated with him in the Poona plague operations.

Lord G. Hamilton: I stated yesterday in this House that the causes and circumstances of the recent outrage at Poona are being investigated, and I have at present nothing to add to that statement. In reply to the hon. member's second question I can only say that all services rendered in connexion with the plague and famine will be duly considered, and will receive such recognition as they deserve.

Sir W. Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that in the plague administration European soldiers were employed in house visitations at Poona, whereas native sepoys were employed in Bombay; and whether he had any information to show that, in consequence, the feelings and prejudices of the people were more considered in Bombay than in Poona.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am aware that the services of British soldiers were utilized on plague duty at Poona. I cannot say for certain that they were not similarly employed at Bombay, but native soldiers were also employed. The European cantonment is large at Poona, while the number of European troops at Bombay is small. I have no information tending to show that the feelings and prejudices of the people were more considered in Bombay than in Poona. As I have already stated, I believe that in both places the Government have been most anxious to do nothing beyond that which was absolutely necessary for the purpose of dealing thoroughly with the plague in its early stages. Lord Sandhurst informed me some time back that he had met the leading inhabitants of Poona to discuss plague regulations, and that the result of the interview was satisfactory.

Sir W. Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether it was his intention to propose Press legislation for India as the result of a private enquiry conducted by the Government regarding recent events at Poona.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave yesterday to the hon. member for Staffordshire, and if the hon. baronet will study the phraseology of that reply he will see that it will not bear the interpretation he has now endeavoured to place upon it.

Sir W. Harcourt: Do I understand from the noble lord that no alteration will be made in the Press law of India until the House of Commons has had an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion upon that subject?

Lord G. Hamilton: I do not know where the right hon. gentleman got that idea from; but I must respectfully point out to him that the Indian Government is responsible for the maintenance of law and order in India (Ministerial cheers), and that upon the Indian Government rests constitutionally the responsibility of initiating such measures as they may consider essential to the discharge of this their duty. (Ministerial cheers.) Any action which they may so take is, of course, subject to review in this House. There is no ground, in my judgment, at the present moment for reversing these well-established principles. (Ministerial cheers.)

July 5th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DISTURBANCES IN INDIA AND THE SIMLA EXODUS.

Sir Edward Gourley asked the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the grave state of affairs in India, he would advise the immediate return of the Government from Simla to Calcutta:

And would he also make such arrangements for the future as would secure the presence of the employees at all seasons (save when on leave) in Calcutta, and thus obviate the necessity for the large annual expenditure involved in moving them to and from Simla.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have no intention of offering advice on this subject to the Government of India, as I have complete confidence in their judgment as to the necessities of the situation. The question of the annual migration to and from Simla was carefully considered by one of my predecessors in office about nine years ago, and I see no reason for altering the arrangements which were then sanctioned.

DISTURBANCES AT CHITPUR.

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett asked the Secretary of State for India whether he could give the House any information as to the recent disturbances at Chitpur, and especially as to the losses among the police.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have received the following telegram from the Government of India.

Telegram from Viceroy 4th July, 1897. "Riot in Calcutta due to possession being taken by Estate of Hindu, under orders of Court, of land alleged, it is said, falsely to contain Mosque. Monday, Police assisted in giving possession. Tuesday, 2,000 low class Muhammadans assembled to rebuild building, alleged to be Mosque, dispersed by police, and seventy arrests made on Wednesday morning. Mid-day Wednesday, rioters re-assembled and attacked municipal pumping station in the neighbourhood dispersed by police and military. Encounters between police and mobs in different places on Thursday, in which eight rioters reported killed and many wounded. Europeans attacked in places by rioters and some reported injured. No shots fired by military. Rioters quiet Friday and Saturday, and leading Muhammadans reported to be desirous of effecting compromise about land."

Telegram from Viceroy, 5th July, 1897. "Calcutta quiet Sunday." Mr. Stevens, the acting Lieutenant-Governor who was in Behar at the time of the outbreak returned to Calcutta yesterday evening.

The Government of India are of opinion that Mr. James, the new Commissioner of Police, acted "with promptitude and judgment. The Government consider the outbreak purely local, and the accounts of it are exaggerated. (Cheers.)

THE OUTRAGES AT POONA— THE JOINT MEMORIAL. "CATEGORICAL REPLY" FROM LORD SANDHURST.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he would provide facilities for the discussion of the present critical condition of affairs in Poona.

Sir L. McIver: Before the right hon. gentleman answers

the question, may I ask him a question of which I have given him private notice? It is this—whether the Government have received any such information from Bombay as will enable the right hon. gentleman or the Secretary of State for India, to express an authoritative opinion upon the contents of the memorial relating to the measures adopted for the suppression of the plague which was mentioned by the hon. member for Banffshire last week in connection with the recent murders in Poona?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to answer the question which will take precedence of that upon the Paper. The House will recollect that on Thursday last the hon. member for Banffshire put to me a series of questions, in connexion with the Poona murders, upon the contents of a memorial addressed to the Bombay Government as to the methods adopted at Poona for the suppression of the plague. The memorial contained also allegations of gross misconduct against the search parties employed by the Government. The memorial was sent to me by the hon. baronet the day before he put the question, and it was unaccompanied by any statement supporting its allegations. I was unable then to express any opinion as to the credibility of its assertions, but I at once telegraphed to Lord Sandhurst asking him to send me a categorical reply to each series of accusations. In the meantime the memorial has been published, no doubt in good faith, by certain newspapers, and strong expressions of opinion have been given in the belief that these allegations and others even stronger by anonymous writers could not in the main be false. I have now a full reply from the Bombay Government which I will read to the House. (Cheers.) It is of considerable length, but in the circumstances the House will feel that I am justified. (Hear, hear.) The reply is divided into several heads, and therefore each will be prefaced by a statement of the allegations to which it refers: "From Governor, Bombay, July 4th, 1897. Deccan Sabha Memorial, dated May 10th, and petition were not received till May 21st, by which time the search, lime washing, and disinfecting parties had been discontinued and military camp broken up. Statements in petition grossly misleading." Allegation A: "People are often sent to the plague hospital without a proper medical examination being previously made to satisfy the authorities that the persons removed are suffering from plague." Reply: "People only sent to hospital after careful medical examination, and if showing symptoms indicative of possible plague." Allegation B: "Relatives and neighbours of plague patients, and even passers-by, are at once hurried to the segregation camp, without being allowed time to make proper arrangements for the custody of the property in their houses." Reply: "Greatest care was taken not to remove to segregation camp any but those necessary to keep under observation. Time was allowed for preparation, and one member of household was allowed to stay behind to look after property." Allegation C: "In the inspection of inmates of houses sometimes persons are subjected to the indignity of being forced to remove all the clothes from their bodies in the presence of the members of the search parties and other people." Reply: "I have not yet heard any allegations of indignity being substantiated. I know that gentleness and consideration were shown." (Cheers.) Allegation D: "The native gentlemen who volunteered to accompany search parties, and were appointed by the committee to that duty, are slighted, and their suggestions are disregarded. In support of this we beg that reference may be made to these gentlemen, who, feeling that they are not properly trusted, decline to accompany the search parties." Reply: "Native gentlemen were asked to accompany search parties, and did so to the very end. They were specially desired to bring to notice all complaints which reached them and to mark down any offending soldier and report to officers." Allegation E: "In the inspection of houses no respect is shown to the religious sentiments of natives in regard to the sanctity of the kitchen and of rooms where worship is offered. In some cases the idols in the Hindu temples have been polluted." Reply: "Search parties were instructed to have regard to religious feelings. Possibility of abuse of those feelings minimised by the presence of native gentlemen." Allegation F: "Notwithstanding the injunctions of the committee in that behalf, much mischief is done in regard of property in burning or destroying, though the rules of the committee require that only the bedding and the clothing of the deceased should be burnt." Reply: "Special care was taken to avoid needless destruction of property, and compensation given for property destroyed." Allegation G: "Persons occupying houses are threatened, and in some cases assaulted, when they remonstrate against the procedure followed by the search parties in the matter of forcibly opening locks and destroying property." Reply: "No unnecessary violence was used in entering houses." Allegation H: "In a few cases the modesty of native ladies has not been respected." Reply: "I do not believe the possibility of indignity to native women, owing to presence of lady doctors and other ladies with the search parties." (Hear, hear.) Allegation I: "Complaints were made to the committee, but the persons injured have failed to obtain redress. The parties injured have no means of finding out the names of the soldiers who misbehave, and who thus bring discredit on the whole body." Reply: "Officers were in plentiful attendance, and it was made known that complaints should be made to them. See also D as to agency employed. English soldiers amounted to little more than one-third of total number, remainder being natives. English soldiers employed mainly for search parties, and their employment certainly not more calculated to cause annoyance than employment of natives, and experience showed for this work the necessity for European agency where procurable. In Poona the only European agency obtainable on a large scale was military." With respect to himself Lord Sandhurst says: "I went to Poona to see about ladies and native gentlemen accompanying search parties; called together leaders of communities and explained what must be done, and that all regard would be paid to religious and other feelings, and asked their aid. I visited Poona twice during operations for enquiry and discussion with Rand and others; never could I find serious complaints substantiated. I kept close touch, hearing from Rand daily. No specific charge of misconduct was made to me during progress of the operations. I give strongest and most emphatic contradiction to the statement that search parties exceeded instructions and grossly misconducted themselves. (Cheers.) The search parties when at work were under commissioned and non-commissioned officers. One of the ladies, Miss Bernard, having twenty years' experience zenana work, and most sympathetic to natives, authorises me to say that she was much struck by the gentleness of the officers and the control of the soldiers, that the officers impressed on the men the delicate nature of the duties, that after the first day or two when there was some little apprehension, which was easily allayed by the ladies and native gentlemen accompanying the search parties, they were met with cheerfulness; that Rand listened to all complaints and suggestions, and was kind and courteous to all. In Rand the Civil Service loses a most able and devoted officer. From inquires made from various sources I am convinced that Poona owes gratitude to officers and men, English and natives, for the duties so well and so considerately performed." (Cheers.) I would only wish to add an expression of my own opinion on two matters. I would wish to endorse the high opinion entertained by Lord Sandhurst of the late Mr. Rand and his work. (Hear, hear.) He was a most capable and promising public servant, who carried out with rare success the terrible trying duty of stamping out the plague in Poona. During the whole time he was thus engaged he was subject to the most violent personal denunciation and defamation by a certain section of the Press and community. He has fallen a victim from the successful discharge of a great public duty, and I am sure that under these circumstances, both members of this House and the Press of this country will exercise great caution before they put into circulation statements calculated to defame his character and work, unless they are personally convinced of the accuracy of any charge they publish. (Cheers.) This caution will, I am sure, be observed also in in reference to the more grave charges that, without one iota of evidence, are being made about military officers and their men. As to Lord Sandhurst, he has from the first outbreak of plague personally supervised and controlled the measures of its suppression. Whenever any hitch occurred either at Poona or Bombay he has personally visited the locality, and by his consideration, tact, and forethought reassured and carried with him the natives whom he has met. He emphatically repudiates these charges, and I unhesitatingly endorse his repudiation. (Cheers.) Lord Sandhurst's conduct throughout the whole period of these plague difficulties has been such as to merit and obtain the complete confidence of Her Majesty's Government, and I think I may add of his late political colleagues and associates. (Cheers.)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: After what has fallen from my noble friend, it is only necessary for me to say, in answer to the question on the paper, that, in the opinion of the Government, it is both unnecessary and contrary to the public interests that the discussion which the hon. baronet desires should take place. (Cheers.)

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS asked whether the memorial referred to did not contain specific statements in proof or attempted proof of the different heads of complaint, and whether the reply contained any explicit explanation or denial of those statements.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: In no single case has any serious charge of misconduct been substantiated.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER asked whether it was true, as reported in certain newspapers, that negotiations had been entered into by the police authorities with the rioters.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON did not understand that there was any intention on the part of the Government that any compromise whatever should be come to between the police and the rioters.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER asked whether he was to take it that the statement in the *Times* was in error.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: So far as I know, you may take it that it is so.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, under present circumstances, he would fix the debate on the Indian Budget for an early date.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that there is any reason for giving a different answer than that which I have already given the hon. gentleman in answer to the same question in the course of the present Session. I am, of course, anxious to consult the convenience of the House in regard to this matter, but I doubt whether it would be desirable to make any alteration in the ordinary date fixed.

July 6th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

IRRIGATION WORKS.

On the motion of Mr. SAMUEL SMITH a Return was granted showing (1) particulars of the protective irrigation works which cost the State during the last fifteen years Rx. 1,813,841; and (2) particulars of the protective railways on the construction of which Rx. 6,550,931 were expended during the same period, as stated in the fifth paragraph of the Financial Statement for 1897-8."

July 7th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

INDIA AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

On the motion of Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES, a Return was granted showing the names of present members of the House of Commons who are in receipt of public money from the revenues of India, whether in the form of salary, pay, pension, or allowance of any kind, or who have received commutation in respect thereof, under the Commutation Acts; the amount they receive or have commuted, with the amount of the commutation money; and the name of the office or nature of the service for which the money is or has been paid (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 197, of Session 1897).

July 9th.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

INDIAN CASES BEFORE THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

Lord STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked her Majesty's Government if they would appoint a Mussulman and a Hindu lawyer to act as assessor in Indian cases before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and if they would confer knighthood on the High Court judges on their appointment, as was the practice with judges of the Supreme Court of Calcutta? He said that when he brought before the House last year the complaints of both Hindus and Mussulmans with respect to decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the Under Secretary for India had taken no notice of his statements, but had confined himself to a flat contradiction. The noble and learned lord on the Woolsack had also blamed him for impugning a decision of the Privy Council, and said that his course ought to have been to ask her Majesty's Government to alter the law as laid down by the Privy Council. But how was the alteration to be asked for unless a case was made out? and that could hardly be done without implying that the Privy Council decision was unsatisfactory. Under these circumstances he had written an article in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* of January last, advocating the appointment of a Hindu and a Mussulman lawyer to act as assessors in Indian cases—a course for which there were precedents in the Privy Council in ecclesiastical cases, and in the House of Lords in Admiralty cases. He had learned since this article was published that the India Office would reply that there were no persons in India fit to be assessors. Now Mr. Justice Amir Ali was perfectly fit to be an assessor for Mussulman cases, and whenever he has finished his time for being entitled to half his pension as a High Court judge he would be ready to come to this country. If he is fit to be a High Court judge, it cannot be said that he is not fit to be an assessor to the Judicial Committee. With regard to the Hindu assessor, Mr. Bhattacharya, the author of a commentary on Hindu law, is stated to be in other ways, such as knowledge of Sanskrit, perfectly fit to be a Hindu assessor. Other Hindu names had been given him, but as they do not equal Mr. Bhattacharya in merit, it is unnecessary to refer to them. My Hindu correspondent very properly observes that: "The difficulty of finding assessors for the Privy Council is, no doubt, great. But if the appointments were to be made, the difficulty would no longer be felt, for persons will qualify themselves. At the present time the number is extremely few. Another difficulty is the unknown conditions of the appointment. Persons may be fit but not willing to cross the seas or reside in England. The question of remuneration and the position to be assigned to assessors is another great factor. I take it that the assessor must be familiar with the English language, and must have mastery over the Hindu and Mussulman law in the original, not the English Acts, but Arabic and Sanskrit treatises on the subject." This opinion seems very reasonable, and what the writer says would dispose of the objection, even if well founded, of there being no person fit. I would suggest that if her Majesty's Government were willing to entertain the proposal favourably, that both the position and remuneration required would be provided for without any trouble by appointing two such assessors to be members of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. As the noble earl the Under-Secretary of State for India had not accepted his statements with regard to a Privy Council decision last year, perhaps he would be pleased to hear a resolution which had been passed in Bengal: "That the heartfelt thanks of this association be conveyed to Lord Stanley of Alderley for having, in the House of Lords, given expression to the views and feelings of the Mussulman community in India with regard to the recent decision of the Privy Council on the question of Wakf, which the Mussulmans consider as inconsistent with the provisions of their law and religion, and as tending to disturb many of their long-cherished social, charitable, and religious institutions, and to render insecure the existing titles to large properties throughout India." He would add that he had asked a legal gentleman to revise the article in the *Asiatic Quarterly*, so as to avoid, if possible, all expressions displeasing to the noble and learned lord on the woolsack. Besides those points in Privy Council decisions, which he mentioned as being unsatisfactory, a competent person in the India Office had told him that the Privy Council judges could not understand what an impartible estate was. Perhaps there was more unwillingness than inability. To understand this it was not necessary to read Mr. Bhattacharya's book; a much more readable description and explanation of its origin is to be found in the *Cité Antique* of M. Faustel de Coulanges, who describes the primitive institutions of the Greeks and the Romans, and shows how they were identical with those of the Hindus, all these laws and institutions having been derived from principles common to those three nations. The Judicial Committee as regards Indian

cases requires strengthening by means of the English judges it receives from India, and the Indian Administration has for many years been endeavouring to diminish the dignity of the Judicature. Dr. Field, an ex-judge of the High Court of Calcutta, in an article named "Government and the Calcutta High Court," in the April number of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, dates this policy from 35 years ago. He complains of the withholding the dignity of knighthood from the judges of the High Court presiding over the administration of justice to a population of over seventy millions; whilst the judges of the old Supreme Court were knighted, though the limits of its ordinary jurisdiction extended no further than the town of Calcutta. He points out that a knighthood conferred after some years of service, or upon retirement, suggests considerations inconsistent with a proper conception of judicial independence. Then the precedence of the Calcutta judges was taken away; Dr. Field asks "on what grounds that did not exist when the High Courts were first established, at which time such a change as part of the general scheme would have been wholly invidious." The next step in the policy of lowering the status of the High Court judges was to reduce their salaries. The position of a Calcutta judge, once worth more than £5,000 a year, is now worth little more than half that sum. The last step recently taken to diminish the worth of these appointments, and further lower the status of the Court, is to extend the period of actual service qualifying for full pension from 11½ to 13½ years. Dr. Field then quotes from an address presented last September to the retiring Chief Justice by representatives of the European and Indian communities:—"It is with regret that we have noticed that in India, where a proportion of the judges of the highest courts in the land are drawn from the Bar of England, the emoluments and conditions of service have been so altered as to make it increasingly difficult to obtain for the High Courts the services of men whom it is most desirable on all grounds should be attracted to them." The retiring Chief Justice, whilst agreeing with the views of the address, stated that a very large number of the more experienced of the district judges retired upon the promulgation of the new rules. The conditions of life in India are improved for the Civil Service by the hill stations, but the judges of the Calcutta Court do not share in these advantages, as they remain in the plains throughout the hot weather. Besides the complaints made by Dr. Field, it may be observed that for some time some Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and other civil servants under them have treated the High Courts and the magistracy with less than fitting respect. Much satisfaction was, therefore, caused by a report that the late Government thought of sending their Lord Chancellor as Viceroy to India, and it was hoped that this would secure respect for the dignity of the judicial body.

The Lord Chancellor said that although the noble lord's motion was in the form of one question it comprehended two different subjects. He only proposed to say something in respect of the first part of the question. The noble lord expressed a hope that he should have forgotten what he said last year. He was very glad to find that the noble lord had forgotten what he said—(laughter)—because his objection to the noble lord then was that he proceeded to discuss at considerable length, and with very scant courtesy towards the learned judges who had decided it, the question that had been decided by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. That night, he was bound to admit, the noble lord had entirely avoided any objection of that sort, and, but for his preamble, he should simply have said in reply to him that he was not able to advise her Majesty's Government to appoint the assessors whom he suggested, even if it were not a sufficient answer to say that they had no power to do it. He did not agree that there had been any real dissatisfaction with the decision to which the noble lord referred. Where there were two sides to a question he presumed the side against whom the decision had been recorded would be dissatisfied with it, and if they were to proceed to alter the law in every case where there would be any dissatisfaction at the decision arrived at there would be a constant oscillation between one law and another. Although there was a little technicality in it, perhaps their lordships would allow him to explain what the decision was. The case came before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in which the validity of a certain settlement was in question. There was in the Muhammadan law, as there was in the English law, an objection against perpetuity—that was to say, the right of one person to stretch his arm at great length beyond the grave and determine what should be the destination of property for a very long period. The particular settlement in question was one in which it was sought to get out of the provision against perpetuity in the Muhammadan law by having, at the end of it, a bequest in favour of the poor, because, again, the Muhammadan law, as the English law, recognised the existence of a charitable trust. The only question of debate was the validity of this particular instrument. The people who had devised this ingenious contrivance had made a settlement which was practically in perpetuity. It was for the family or friends—anybody who might claim relationship by affinity or consanguinity with the settler, and in the event of these all being exhausted, then, "for the benefit of the poor." The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decided that that was a mere colourable addition, that the true character of the instrument was to establish a perpetuity and that the addition that in the event of a failure of all these persons it should then be a charitable trust, was only a colourable evading of the effect of the law. The noble lord would observe, therefore, that the effect of the decision was simply that that particular instrument, that that particular contrivance, was invalid. That was a decision affirming the decision of the High Court of Calcutta, and that decision was based on the previous decision of the native courts in which the same conclusion had been arrived at. He need not point out that that was not a decision which affected to alter, or did alter, the Muhammadan law. He did not know whether the noble lord suggested that, because there was dissatisfaction with the decision, there should be persons appointed who should instruct the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Indian law. It appeared to him that that certainty assumed that they were unable to do what they had been doing now for many years to, he submitted, the great satisfaction of her Majesty's Indian subjects, and he had never heard, until the noble lord himself suggested it, that their decisions had been questioned upon any ground of their ignorance of the matter with which they were dealing. They were competent, he presumed, to construe the English language, and the documents from which its decisions were obtained, and upon the authority of which they rested, were English translations, and he need not say that it was the duty of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a duty which he was quite certain they discharged, to acquaint themselves with what was the Muhammadan law, just as they acquainted themselves with decisions of other systems of law which it was their duty to administer. He thought it right to make this explanation, lest it should be supposed that the Judicial Committee had, in this particular case, gone out of their ordinary course. His general answer to the noble lord must be that he did not think that the Government were at all prepared to adopt a new system of administering justice in the Judicial Committee, there being, as he thought, no failure of justice in particular cases. The answer to the first part of the noble lord's question was simply in the negative.

The Marquis of Salisbury: As my noble and learned friend has divided the question into two, perhaps I had better reply to the end of it. But I shall not deal with it in any more satisfactory way, because the only thing I can say is that it is not according to precedent to draw into discussion the use which her Majesty may make of her prerogative of conferring honour, and I should be sorry to set a bad example in that respect.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS.

East India (Examinations for the Civil Service),—Copy presented—of Regulations for Examinations for the Civil Service of India [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN ASSAM.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had received any official information as to the extent of the destruction by the recent earthquake in Assam of the property of the Welsh Presbyterian Foreign Missionary Society, which had stations in the Khasia and Jaintia Hills and in Sylhet:

And, whether he had any information as to the position of

the missionaries of that society in their present calamitous circumstances.

Lord George Hamilton: No, Sir, I have no information concerning the injury done to the property in question. All telegrams received by me regarding the results of the earthquake have been published; tidings by mail have not yet arrived from Assam. The Viceroy's telegram of June 22 said: "Reassuring news from Sylhet district, where damage and distress caused by earthquake are less than was supposed."

THE ENLISTMENT OF EURASIANS.

Captain Pirie asked the Secretary of State for India whether the system of enlisting Eurasians (the descendants of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen in India) into the British Army in India, as carried on in past years, might now, in view of the strongly expressed desire of this class of Her Majesty's subjects, receive more distinct encouragement from the Government.

Lord G. Hamilton: The question has been more than once carefully considered by her Majesty's Government, who are not prepared to make any change in the regulations under which this class can enlist in the British Army.

THE RIOTS IN CHITPUR.

Mr. Samuel Smith asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had any information to show that 600 was a low estimate of the number of persons killed in the recent riots in the city of Calcutta.

Lord George Hamilton: So far from 600 being a low estimate of the persons killed in the recent riots in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, the real number seems to be seven ascertained deaths. The following is the latest telegraphic information that I have received on the subject, dated July 8: "Your telegram of yesterday. Government of Bengal reports number of killed during riots seven";—(cries of "Oh!")—"estimated number wounded about 20, of whom four or five may have since died, the bodies being disposed of by their relatives. Calcutta reported quiet to-day, and Muhammadan leaders scrupulously exerting themselves to allay excitement. Mill hands quiet."

Mr. S. Smith asked the noble lord whether the *Times* correspondent had not put the number at 600, and whether other estimates did not put it as high as 1,500.

Lord George Hamilton: I do not know where the hon. gentleman gets his information from, but I have given him the figures from the authentic report.

STERLING AND RUPEE LOANS.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been drawn to the memorandum written by Mr. J. H. Sleigh, manager of the Bank of Bombay, showing the large economy which would be secured by taking up a sterling loan in this country, and whether, in view of the proposal of the Government of India to take up a rupee loan of four crores in India, he would consider the desirability of adopting the course suggested.

Lord George Hamilton: I will refer the hon. member to the reply which I gave on 2nd July to a precisely similar question.

THE PLAGUE AT POONA.
ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES.

Mr. Weir asked the Secretary of State for India, having regard to the reply given by Lord Sandhurst as to certain allegations relative to the methods adopted at Poona for the suppression of the plague, and more particularly as to the statement that in the case of the inspection of the inmates of houses there was no possibility of indignity to Native women, owing to the presence of lady doctors and other ladies with search parties, would he state the number of lady doctors at Poona and their names.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am informed by the Bombay Government that the lady doctors engaged with search parties were Miss Bernard, M.D., Miss Crawley, L.R.C.P., Miss Dids, hospital assistant, Mrs. Goodall, a Parsee with some medical qualifications. Other ladies were Mrs. Taylor, Miss Kelly, Mrs. Fernandez, Mrs. Balubai Awte (Hindu), Mrs. Bhimabai Awte (Hindu), Miss E. Barnard, Miss Tarkhad (Hindu), Miss M'Intosh (the Hong Kong nurse), when not employed as a nurse.

Sir M. Bhownaggree said that, arising out of the question, he wished to ask the noble lord whether, besides lady doctors, many other ladies did not, together with independent gentlemen, at Bombay, Poona, and other plague centres, accompany those search parties which went to private houses to perform the work of inspection and other duties in connexion with relief measures.

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes; I believe that such assistance was given, and I understand that the Government encouraged such assistance. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. MacNeill asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been directed to a letter of the late Mr. Rand, dated the 9th April, 1897, stating that women in Poona would not in the future be examined in the public streets for plague spots without the consent of the male members of their families:

And, whether, having regard to this statement in this letter, he still adhered to the declaration that no charge of indignity inflicted on females by the officials of the Indian Government at Poona had been substantiated.

Lord G. Hamilton: The hon. gentleman in his question asserts that the late Mr. Rand stated in a letter dated April 9, 1897, that women in Poona were examined in public streets for plague spots. The late Mr. Rand made no such statement in his letter of the 9th of April. (Hear, hear.) What he said was that no inspection of any females should hereafter take place in the streets if they or their families objected. Upon this word "inspection" the hon. baronet the member for Banffshire chose to put the interpretation attached to the word "examination," that it meant stripping women in the public streets in order to detect plague spots, and currency to this interpretation has been given by the press. The following telegram from the Government of Bombay disposes of this legend:—"Street inspection mentioned in Rand's letter of April 9th last arose thus:—When searching was first instituted, women in many houses remained in dark rooms, where it was impossible to see whether they were ill, so householders were desired to cause their women to come into an open place, such as reasonably light rooms, or courtyard, or street, merely that it might be seen whether they looked ill. If there appeared reason for actual medical examination, it was conducted with every regard for decency, not in public, and in case of women never by any one but a woman, unless no objection was raised to examination by a commissioned medical officer. Allegations that women were stripped in street to detect plague symptoms is malevolent fabrication." (Cheers.) "The native gentlemen and lady doctors must have been cognizant of street inspection, as of all that went on." This being so, I adhere to the answer I previously gave to the effect that in the opinion of the Bombay Government no charge has been substantiated that indignity was offered by the search parties to native ladies. (Cheers.)

July 12th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

Petition from Kanwar Harnam Singh, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

THE STATE OF JHALAWAR.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Government had come to a final decision as to the subdivision and settlement of the State of Jhalawar; if so, whether he would state what the arrangement was:

And, whether he would lay on the Table of the House the Papers relating to the present condition of affairs in the State.

Lord G. Hamilton: The general outline of the final decision regarding Jhalawar is as follows: The claim of the Kotah State under the treaties and engagements of 1838 to recover possession of its ancient territories then assigned to Jhalawar is held to have been established. The other portions of Jhalawar, consisting of Chan Mahla and the Shahabad

Pergunnah, will be re-granted by the British Government to a selected member of the Kotah branch of the Qualin Singhi's family. An exchange, however, of Jhabrapatan for Ahahabad will be effected under suitable conditions, in order to retain the town of that name as the capital of the new State of Jhalawar. The decision was announced in Darbar on June 5th, and when I receive a report of the proceedings of the Government of India, I shall be happy to lay further papers relating to Jhalawar on the Table of the House.

THE NOMINATION OF MR. TILAK.

Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Governor of Bombay had confirmed the nomination of Gungadhur Tilak, of Poona, editor of the *Mahratta* and *Kesari* journals of Poona, to the Legislative Council:

And whether he was aware that Gungadhur Tilak, besides publishing attacks upon the British authorities in his papers, had himself made speeches inciting to rebellion; if so, whether the Government of India proposed to take any action in that matter.

Mr. Howell asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that Gungadhur Tilak, whose election to the Legislative Council of Bombay was reported to be confirmed by Lord Sandhurst, was some years ago sentenced to a double term of imprisonment for being concerned in a conspiracy to defame a distinguished Native statesman, Ras Bahdur W. Burvé, minister of an important Native State:

And whether the acceptance of that election to the Legislative Council by Lord Sandhurst was concurred in by his two colleagues, who, together with Lord Sandhurst, constitute the Government of Bombay.

Lord G. Hamilton: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer together questions 39 and 55, which both relate to the same subject.

It is true that the nomination of Gungadhur Tilak to the Legislative Council has been confirmed by the Governor of Bombay, in whom alone the right of confirming or rejecting is vested under the Rules. Gungadhur Tilak was nominated in 1895 to the same position, and he was again nominated in 1897.

It is also true that Gungadhur Tilak was some years ago sentenced to imprisonment; that he is the editor of two newspapers; and that he has recently made the speech alluded to; but the question whether the articles which have appeared in those newspapers are seditious, and whether that speech contained an incitement to rebellion, is a matter of law, as to which the Government of Bombay has not at present arrived at any final opinion.

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett: Does the noble lord propose to take any action in regard to this nomination?

Lord G. Hamilton: I certainly think it would be premature to express an opinion at present.

Mr. MacNeill asked by whom this gentleman was nominated.

Lord G. Hamilton said he believed he was nominated by the Central Municipal Authority of Bombay.

July 13th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE NOMINATION OF MR. TILAK.

Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett asked the Secretary of State for India whether the other two members of the Government of Bombay agreed with the Governor in his acceptance of the nomination of Ganguhdar Tilak to the Legislative Council.

Lord George Hamilton: I stated yesterday in this House that the Governor alone is responsible for the acceptance or refusal of a nomination to the Legislative Council. Members of the Bombay Council do not share this responsibility, and I have therefore no information as to their opinions on the subject of this nomination.

Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett asked whether it was not the usual practice in the cases of appointments of this kind for the head of the Government to consult the other members of the Government.

Lord George Hamilton: I do not know what the practice is: but as the responsibility rests with the Governor, I think it is undesirable to enlarge that responsibility.

PETITIONS FROM ZEMINDARS.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had received petitions from the zemindars of Fingeshwar, Khariar, and Shahaspur-Lohara, all in the Central Provinces, complaining of certain encroachments made by the local authorities on their ancient rights and titles; if so, whether any decision had been arrived at and any reply been sent to the petitioners: and whether he would lay copies of each reply upon the Table of the House.

Lord George Hamilton: No, Sir. No such petitions as are described in the question have reached me. When I receive them together with copies of the replies (if any) which have been sent to them, I will consider whether they can be laid upon the Table.

FAMINE AND RAILWAYS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to the difficulties encountered in the famine relief of the large province of Chutia Nagpur, owing to the absence of railway communication over an area of 21,000 square miles, with a population of over four millions:

And, whether any and what steps were contemplated for opening up railway communication throughout the province both for facilitating famine relief and developing the mineral and agricultural resources of the district.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am aware that there was at one time some difficulty in connection with the supply of food to Palamow, but I have heard of no other cases of difficulty in connection with the famine administration of Chutia Nagpur. There is a line of railway now under construction in the province of Chutia Nagpur by the extension southward of the East Indian Railway system from Mogul Serai to Gya, and eventually to Palamow. Proposals are also under the consideration of the Government of India for the creation of branch lines northward into Chutia Nagpur in connection with the Bengal and Nagpur Railway Company's system, which already traverses a portion of the province.

July 14th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CIVIL SERVANTS OVER SIXTY-FIVE.

On the motion of Mr. Hanbury a Return was granted for "Copy of Minute by the Secretary of State for India stating the circumstances under which certain members of his permanent establishment have been retained in the Service after they have attained the age of 65."

THE POONA OUTRAGES PROFESSOR GOKHALE'S STATEMENT.

Sir J. Fergusson asked the Secretary of State for India if he would make enquiries into the truth of the specific allegations reported to have been made by Professor Gokhale of the Fergusson College, Poona, in the *Manchester Guardian* of July 2 last, for the authority of which he vouched, that two women were violated by British soldiers employed upon the plague search parties, one of whom committed suicide afterwards.

Mr. Parker Smith asked whether Professor Gokhale was the gentleman who addressed a meeting of hon. members about a week ago on the subject of the plague regulations.

Lord G. Hamilton: As soon as my attention was directed to this allegation I thought it necessary, from the gravity of the accusation made and the apparent authenticity with which it was surrounded, at once to telegraph to the Governor of Bombay asking him to make immediate enquiries as to the truth of the charge. His reply is as follows: "Regarding Gokhale's statement alleging violation of women, from all enquiries I have made I am convinced this is a still more gross and malevolent invention than that about stripping women." (Cheers.) In reply to the second question, I believe my hon. friend is correct, that this is the same individual who recently addressed members of this House in one of the committee rooms.

Sir J. FERGUSSON: May I ask whether this professor is in receipt of salary from the Government?

Lord G. HAMILTON: No, sir; he is a professor of political economy in a college which obtains a grant from the Bombay Government.

Sir H. VINCENT: Who invited the professor? (A laugh.)

The question was not answered.

Mr. TOMLINSON: Is it a Government appointment?

Lord G. HAMILTON: I cannot answer that, but I think the college authorities appoint.

July 15*th*.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN BUDGET. DELAY OF EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM.

East India (Accounts and Estimates, 1897-8),—Copy presented,—of Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE AND THE OUTRAGES AT POONA.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the Secretary of State for India if he was aware that in the last two years an annual celebration to stir up disaffection against England among the Natives of India had been set on foot under the designation of the Shivajee Accession ceremony:

Whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that on the 12th, 13th, and 14th of last month such celebration took place on a large scale in Poona, when one, Professor Paranjpe, delivered a discourse, the substance of which was, that in discontent lay the root of prosperity, and contentment killed prosperity; also, that on the same occasion a man named Jinsiwale stated that Shivajee's ruling passion was a terrible disgust at the humiliation of his country and religion by aliens, that was, the British; and added that he did not see why the saying of the revolutionists in France, that they were not murdering men but simply removing the thorns in their way, should not be made applicable to the Deccan, of which Poona was the capital:

Whether he was aware that Gungadhur Tilak, the editor of the *Mahratta* and *Kesari* newspapers, presided at the celebration and made a speech, in which he counselled the murder of Europeans, and that the malachchas, that was, the British, had no charter from God to rule India:

And, whether any steps had been taken by the local authorities to stop such systematic training of large numbers of people and students, and the incitement of them to such actions as led to the assassination of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst within a week of the last Shivajee celebration.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am aware that an annual festival has recently been established in commemoration of Shivajee. I have seen a newspaper report of certain speeches made at the festival which took place last month, and it supports the description given in the second and third paragraphs of the question. The question as to the connexion between public incitements to violence and crime is occupying the attention both of the Government of India and of the Government of Bombay, but I am not prepared at present to make any further statement on the subject. (Hear, hear.)

THE OUTRAGES AT POONA. THE MEMORIAL OF MAY 10.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he could now state what enquiry was made at the time into the detailed allegations of oppression contained in the Poona memorial of the 10th of May regarding plague adminstration, and what reply was given to the memorialists.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: In reply to an enquiry which I addressed to the Governor of Bombay, I am informed that on the receipt of this memorial Mr. Rand was desired to report upon the allegations which it contained, and that the reply of the Government was postponed until his report should be received. The report was, however, still incomplete at the time of his murder, and consequently no reply has yet been given. I should point out that the memorial was not sent to the Governor until the special plague duties had ceased. There was no ground for considering the possibility of a change of system. I am further informed that all complaints made to Government officers during plague operations were enquired into, and any matters including general allegations were subject to Lord Sandhurst's own personal enquiry.

The following question in the name of Sir W. Wedderburn, also appeared on the paper: To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether any European soldiers, employed on plague duty at Poona, worked in any out of the way places away from the cognizance of their officers.

The hon. baronet said that the question had been so altered by the clerks at the Table that he did not propose to put it.

THOUGHTFULNESS OF SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he desired most respectfully to direct the attention of the Speaker to what he conceived to be an abuse of the notice paper of the House and of the privilege of asking questions. On July 13th notice was given that the following question would be asked to-day. It was a question affecting private character and making personal charges, and it had not been asked:—

"Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree—To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a native paper of Bombay, called the *Gujarati*, has in its issue of the 13th ult., in writing on the sanitary measures under consideration for the protection of the British Army, described the same in English as the Government traffic in women and in the vernacular as the Government brothel system; also that the same journal stated with reference to the statute of her Majesty which the people of Lahore had decided to erect in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee, that the high State officers had carried this proposal with the help of guns and bayonets; and whether the authorities in India had taken any, and if so, what steps to bring this journal to trial and to stop the continual efforts made by it to incite the native population against British rule."

The rule, as he understood it, was distinct that when a personal accusation was embodied in a question on the notice paper, and got an extensive circulation through that agency, that question ought not to be withdrawn, but the hon. gentlemen who put it on the paper should have the courage to ask it. (Hear, hear.)

The SPEAKER: I do not see that the question of the hon. gentleman raises any question of order or privilege. The question which the hon. member has just read is not one which casts any reflection on the personal character of any individual. It is an attack on the policy of the Indian Government by an Indian newspaper, and the hon. member who put the question down was equally entitled to take it off. If the hon. member, however, desires to have the question answered, of course he is at liberty to put it down himself on the notice paper. (Laughter.)

Sir M. BHOWNAGGREE as a matter of personal explanation, said that as the hon. gentleman opposite had charged him, impliedly if not explicitly, with not having the courage to put the question which appeared on the notice paper he wished to state why he did not do so. It would be seen that the question which he put ended with almost the same enquiry as that he did not put, and therefore he did not think it necessary to occupy the time of the Secretary of State for India or the House by putting the second question, the withdrawal of which the hon. gentleman, without any adequate justification, had objected to. That was the reason, and the only reason, why he withdrew the question.

July 16*th*.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS.

East India (Contagious Diseases) (No. 6, 1897),—Copy presented,—of Further Correspondence regarding the Measures to be adopted for checking the spread of Veneral Disease among the British Troops in India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

July 19th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MORAL AND MATERIAL PROGRESS.

East India (Progress and Condition),—Copy presented,—of Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the year 1895-6. Thirty-second Number [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ELAVAS IN TRAVANCORE.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether a class known as the Elavas were excluded from all appointments in the State of Travancore on the ground that they belonged to a low caste, although they formed over 16 per cent. of the population of the State, and contributed largely to its revenues:

Whether they were denied admission to most of the Government schools in the State, and whether two graduates of the Madras University (of this class) had recently been compelled to take service under the Madras and Mysore Governments because they were denied positions in their own State:

And, whether any, and, if so, what steps had been taken by the Madras Government, through the Political Agent, to remedy this state of things in Travancore.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have no precise information as to the first question. As to the second I find from the latest report I have received that 9,517 Elava boys and 1,368 Elava girls were under instruction in Travancore, representing 8 per cent. of the total number of pupils. I have no information as to the two graduates referred to, and I must observe that in the internal administration of education and patronage in the Native States of India the British Government does not actively interfere. I have no objection, however, to calling the attention of the Madras Government to the question asked by the hon. member.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

During discussion as to the business of the House, the following question was asked.

Sir J. Lubbock: Can the right hon. gentleman (the First Lord of the Treasury) say when the Indian Budget will be taken?

Mr. Balfour: I shall carefully follow precedent in this matter. (Laughter.) I think there is no chance of our being able to take it until we reach the last week of the Session.

NOMINATIONS TO THE BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Sir James Fergusson asked the Secretary of State for India what were the bodies to whom the privilege of election for the Governor's selection to the Legislative Council of Bombay had been granted:

And whether any, and what, changes had been made since the seats were originally allocated.

Lord George Hamilton: The eight bodies who enjoy the privilege of nominating members of the Bombay Legislative Council, subject to the Governor's approval, are at present as follows:—1, Bombay Corporation; 2, Bombay University; 3, Deccan Sardars; 4, Sind Landholders; 5, Municipalities of the Northern Division; 6, Local Boards in the Southern Division; 7, Bombay Chamber of Commerce; 8, Local Boards in the Central Division. The only material change that has been made since the seats were first allocated is that the Local Boards in the Central Division, of which Poona is the chief, have been substituted, as a nominating body, for the Karachi Chamber of Commerce.

July 22nd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FISH-CURING IN BENGAL.

Mr. Warr asked the Secretary of State for India whether in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay salt used for curing purposes was supplied from the Government Salt Works at cost price and free of duty, whereas in the Presidency of Bengal the full duty of two rupees eight annas per maund (equivalent to nearly £5 per ton) was imposed; and, if so, whether he would undertake to consider the removal of this inequality between the Presidencies, with a view to the encouragement of fish-curing in the Presidency of Bengal and consequent increase of food supplies.

Lord George Hamilton: Salt is supplied to persons working at fish-curing yards in Bombay and Madras at a price of eight to ten annas per maund duty free. Similar fish-curing yards have not been opened on the Bengal coast; but if there was likely to be a demand for such facilities, the Government would gladly encourage a fish-curing industry by granting the same privileges as in Madras and Bombay. The salt preventive staff is now being strengthened on the Bengal coast, and the management of fish-curing yards there will become easier.

July 23rd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BRITISH RESIDENTS AT INDIAN COURTS.

On the motion of Major Jameson, a Return was granted showing the salaries paid to the British Residents accredited to the Courts of Indian Rájás and to Heads of Departments (when employed), stating in each case whether they perform executive duties."

THE SHORT SERVICE SYSTEM.

Captain Pirie asked the Under Secretary of State for War, whether the War Office would be prepared to reconsider the question of long service in India for British troops, as being both physically and financially advantageous, especially in view of the disastrous casualties from enteric fever and venereal disease among British soldiers in India.

Mr. Brodrick: The application of the short service system to India has been proved to possess many advantages from a physical, financial, and military point of view, and her Majesty's Government has no intention of reverting to the old system of long service for the Indian army.